

REMARKS

Applicants have received and reviewed an Office Action dated March 29, 2005. By way of response, Applicants have canceled claims 7, 15, and 17-18 without prejudice, amended claims 1, 2, and 8, and added claims 19-24. No new matter is presented. Claims 1-6, 8-14, 16, and 19-24 are pending. Applicants submit that the pending claims are supported by the specification.

For the reasons given below, Applicants submit that the amended claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Rejection of Claims Under § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-14 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Gilar (Analytical Biochemistry 298, 196-206 (2001)) in view of a Review of Waters' New Hybrid Particle Technology and Its Use in High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), pages 1-4 (1999) and Gjerde (U.S. Patent Pub. 2002/0185441). The Examiner rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Gilar (Analytical Biochemistry 298, 196-206 (2001)) in view of a Review of Waters' New Hybrid Particle Technology and Its Use in High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), pages 1-4 (1999) and Gjerde (U.S. Patent Pub. 2002/0185441) as applied to claims 1-4 and 16, and further in view of Gjerde (U.S. Patent No. 6,524,480). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Independent claim 1 now includes the limitations of claim 7. Claim 1 now recites that the additive is a neutral, polar, fluorinated organic compound. Amended claim 1 also recites that

“the presence of the neutral, polar, fluorinated organic compound in the mobile phase leads to an increased column lifetime, as compared with the lifetime observed in the absence of the neutral, polar, fluorinated organic compound, all conditions being equal”

The primary Gilar reference is silent with respect to additives that increase column lifetime. The rejection employs the secondary Gjerde reference to supplement the disclosure of the primary reference for disclosure of an additive that increases column lifetime. The Gjerde reference discloses EDTA as an additive that increases column lifetime.

The Gilar reference and the Gjerde reference, either separately or combined, are silent on the ability of a neutral, polar, fluorinated organic compound to increase column lifetime. The

other secondary references do not remedy the shortcomings of the Gilar and Gjerde references. Therefore, the references cited in these rejections do not make obvious the presently claimed invention.

Newly presented claims 19-24 relate to a method employing "an aqueous mobile phase comprising an ion pairing agent and less than 10% by volume of an additive comprising at least one neutral, polar, fluorinated organic compound". The Gilar reference does not employ or suggest employing both an ion pairing agent and an additive comprising at least one neutral, polar, fluorinated organic compound. The secondary references do not remedy this shortcoming of the Gilar reference. Therefore, the references cited in these rejections do not make obvious the invention of new claims 19-24.

Accordingly, based on the foregoing differences, it is submitted that the references cited in the prior art rejections neither teach nor suggest the presently claimed methods, and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Summary

In summary, Applicants submit that each of claims 1-6, 8-14, 16, and 19-24 are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below, if the Examiner believes that doing so will expedite prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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